

# **2011 Annual Report**

## **Michigan's First Congressional District**



**Dr. Dan Benishek**  
**January 2, 2012**

# **2011 Annual Report To Northern Michigan**



U.S. Representative Dan Benishek M.D.  
Michigan's First Congressional District  
January 2, 2012

[www.benishek.house.gov/2011AnnualReport](http://www.benishek.house.gov/2011AnnualReport)



**Congress of the United States**  
**House of Representatives**

Dear Michigander:

As this year comes to a close, Northern Michigan—and the rest of America—is faced with making critical decisions that will determine what kind of future there will be for our children and grandchildren. We are confronted with enormous challenges—our economy is still struggling, an alarming number of people are out of work, and our federal government is cascading toward bankruptcy. When facing all these obstacles, I am reminded of the words of Thomas Paine: “These are the times that try men’s souls.”

As your representative in Congress, I will not pretend that any one person or idea will solve all the problems facing America. But I do believe that by using the common sense approach of shrinking government deficits and limiting overzealous federal regulations, we can create a better environment for job creation to occur and make a stronger fiscal foundation for this country.

---

**“...I don’t profess to have all the answers...but my main focus has been to craft job creating policies and a stronger fiscal foundation for the government...and while we’ve made progress, we still have much work left to do.”**

---

Since being sworn into elected office for the first time in my life last January, I have worked, to the best of my ability, to fulfill the promises I have made to my constituents in the Northern Michigan. I have never professed to have all the answers or expertise on every issue. Over the past year I have read each piece of legislation that has crossed my desk and voted in a way that I believe reflects the values and interests of Northern Michigan, not Washington D.C.

I have strived to base my votes on the views of my constituents and not the opinions of Washington interest groups. Additionally, I have endeavored to make my office as open and accessible as possible for constituents.

While the House of Representatives has taken actions this year to limit the size of government, reduce our government’s debt, and improve job creation, there still is very much work left to be done. In the coming year, I hope to continue working on federal policies that permit Northern Michigan to build a more prosperous and fiscally sound future. Please know that I am honored to serve as the First District’s elected representative.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Dan Benishek".

Dan Benishek M. D.  
Member of Congress  
Michigan’s First District

## Table of Contents

<b>I. Sponsored Legislation.....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>II. Cosponsored Legislation.....</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>III. Key Votes &amp; Issues.....</b>	<b>47</b>
<b>IV. Committee Activities.....</b>	<b>67</b>
<b>V. Listening To Northern Michigan</b>	
▪ Overview.....	77
▪ Meet and Greets .....	78
▪ Federal Debt Listening Tour.....	82
▪ Farm Tour.....	83
▪ Classroom Visits.....	84
▪ Job Provider Visits.....	85
<b>VI. Official Communications</b>	
▪ Floor Statements.....	87
▪ News Releases & Statements.....	99
▪ Opinion Editorial Columns.....	157
<b>VII. Constituent Correspondence</b>	
▪ Correspondence by Month/Issue/County.....	170
▪ Teletown Hall Meetings.....	173
<b>VIII. Constituent Casework.....</b>	<b>174</b>
<b>IX. Special Initiatives .....</b>	<b>179</b>
<b>X. Benishek ‘By The Numbers’ .....</b>	<b>191</b>
<b>XI. Acknowledgements.....</b>	<b>193</b>

## Report Overview

This annual report outlines Congressman Dan Benishek's first year in Congress. The purpose of this document is to inform First District citizens about the votes, statements, and positions of their elected representative. The following summary explains the content of each section within the report.

- **Sponsored Legislation** (Page 4)

The "Sponsored Legislation" section outlines each piece of legislation authored by Rep. Dan Benishek during 2011.

- **Cosponsored Legislation** (Page 12)

The "Cosponsored Legislation" section lists, by issue area, all 162 bills cosponsored by Rep. Dan Benishek during 2011. The listing includes the bill's sponsor, number of other cosponsors, and which Congressional Committee the bill has been referred to.

- **Key Votes & Issues** (Page 47)

The "Key Votes & Issues" section details key votes, listed by issue area, taken by Rep. Dan Benishek during 2011.

- **Committee Activities** (Page 67)

The "Committee Activities" section provides background information on the three committees on which Rep. Dan Benishek serves.

- **Listening To Northern Michigan** (Page 76)

The "Listening To Northern Michigan" section lists all of the public meetings and visits Rep. Dan Benishek made in the First District during 2011.

- **Official Communications** (Page 86)

The "Official Communications" section contains a complete listing of all floor statements, news statements, releases and opinion editorial columns written by Rep. Benishek during 2011.

- **Constituent Correspondence** (Page 169)

The "Constituent Correspondence" section outlines constituent feedback received by Rep. Benishek during 2011.

- **Constituent Casework** (Page 174)

The "Constituent Casework" section contains information regarding constituent casework requests received by Rep. Benishek during 2011.

- **Special Initiatives** (Page 179)

The "Special Initiatives" section contains information regarding special projects that Rep. Benishek and his staff worked on during 2011.

- **Benishek 'By The Numbers'** (Page 191)

The "Benishek 'By The Numbers'" section outlines a numerical breakdown of Rep. Benishek's first year in office.